

History and Process

In 2006, Indiana State Health Commissioner, Judy Monroe, M.D., collaborated with a number of partner agencies and community organizations to convene what would be known as the Indiana Viral Hepatitis Advisory Council or IVHAC in response to the estimated one in twelve people worldwide living with viral hepatitis. The IVHAC membership was represented by a diverse group of professionals from around the state committed to eliminating viral hepatitis through education, prevention, and care of those living with these diseases. Documents that guided the IVHAC process include: the Iowa Department of Public Health Viral Hepatitis Plan 2004, Wisconsin Hepatitis Strategic Plan 2003, Eliminating Hepatitis: A Call to Action April 2006, National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable Plan to Eliminate Viral Hepatitis, and Raising the Profile, Raising Your Voice: A Primer on Viral Hepatitis Policy Making and Programs at the Federal Level, National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors (NASTAD) May 2007. Early in the process, the Council established the following mission and vision statement to guide them throughout the strategic planning process:

To reduce the burden of viral hepatitis and its complications among Indiana citizens.

To decrease viral hepatitis transmission and its complications in Indiana citizens surveillance, education, prevention, and disease management.

The IVHAC met bi-monthly with early meetings dedicated to educating the membership about viral hepatitis and the strategic planning process. Later meetings focused on completion of the strategic plan. Training the council received included: a comprehensive overview of viral hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E, goals of the Indiana Perinatal Hepatitis B and Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Programs, current recommendations for scheduling, cost, current funding, and other factors associated with hepatitis B and C immunizations, information about needle/syringe exchange, Department of Correction policies around viral hepatitis, viral hepatitis treatment, the roles of public health and medicine in the prevention and treatment of viral hepatitis, and an introduction to Gastroenterology and Hepatology. The IVHAC membership utilized this training, the most current epidemiological data, and completed plans from other states to draft a framework and construct a strategic plan addressing the unique and evolving needs of the citizens of Indiana.

The following plan provides a comprehensive and important first step towards eliminating viral hepatitis in our state, our nation, and the world. It is the sincere hope of the IVHAC and the thousands of Indiana citizens living with or affected by viral hepatitis that the reader takes this document and uses it as a tool to educate themselves and the public about viral hepatitis and to facilitate partnerships for the purpose of providing for the prevention, care, and eradication of the viral hepatitis.

The plan is presented through the division of four principles. Each principle is then condensed into goals, then objectives, and finally action items. The four principles of the plan are; I.) Surveillance, II.) Prevention & Education, III.) Comprehensive Care, IV.) Grants, Legislation, and Policy Development.